

PARENTING TIPS



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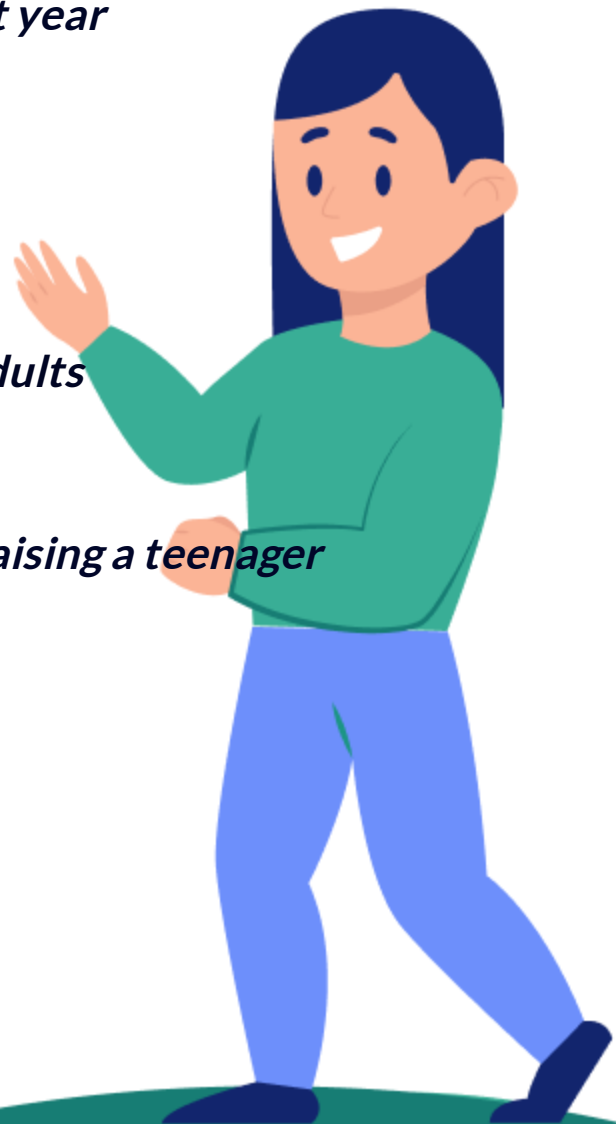
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Introduction



“A new baby is like the beginning of all things – wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities.”

Eda Leshan



Becoming a parent is one of the true wonders of life. You will experience joy, sadness, frustration, bliss, surprise, and all sorts of emotions as you welcome your little one to your life. No parents are perfect. But that doesn't mean you're not going to do your best to give the best life to your child.

This time of your life can be hectic and overwhelming. Sometimes, it can be dangerous too. According to the Mental Health Foundation, around 66% of parents suffered from severe mental illness with their children under 18 years of age.

Moreover, critical parenting is also linked to depression and anxiety. Parents who keep criticizing and undermining the feelings of their children are most likely to go through emotional health problems.

On the brighter side, welcoming a child into your life can be a miracle. Who knows that staring at your little one with mismatched socks after a long day at work is the only rest you need? There are moments that you will never experience with other people, except being with your children.

There will be bad days, too. Prepare for sleepless nights, especially in the first years. There will be mistakes, and there will also be something to celebrate for. You will learn a lot about being a parent. While some skills can't be picked from a book, it's still worth the time preparing yourself to care for a child.

This book will help you find out everything you need to know about parenting and all of its wonderful aspects.

Chapter 1

Parenting and its definitions



“Parenting is the easiest thing in the world to have an opinion about, but the hardest thing in the world to do.”

Matt Walsh



What is parenting?

Parenting or child-rearing is one of the oldest practices in the world. Since the beginning of time, human beings are responsible for caring for their offspring. While the styles and methods of parenting vary, all of them share three major goals:

- 1 Ensure that your child grow healthy and safe;
- 2 Prepare the child to become a productive adult and;
- 3 Transmit cultures, values, and traditions so that the legacy of your family lives on.

To achieve this goal, you must be capable of building and nurturing a loving parent-child relationship. According to the American Psychological Association, this relationship is crucial for the healthy development of your child.

There are many challenges when it comes to parenting. The first challenge that you'll encounter is changing diet and exercise for your kids. It's your responsibility to teach them how to take care of their bodies at a tender age. Moreover, some parents are faced with confronting childhood obesity. It is rampant and affects about 13.7 million children, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

You also need to face the school dropout dilemma. Many parents can relate to this problem. As your child grows older, you have to prepare them to cope up with stress. Left unchecked, your child could be facing an endless list of mental problems caused by stress. It's an entirely different story if you are a single parent. Life in a broken family is indeed difficult, and you have to make sure to fill the gaps that your missing partner has left in your child's heart.



And the most difficult—according to most parents, is the teenage years. This is where you'll encounter rebellion, hormone changes, sexuality, identity issues, and even alcohol. Most parents claim that this is the most difficult stage of parenting. You need to go through it with your child if you want him or her to become a dignified adult later on in life. As they develop their independent minds, they'll want less and less of your help. The best thing to do is to let them have it their way, learn their mistakes on their own, but never, ever leave their side.

There are many challenges to raising a child. You'll watch him grow from a little bundle of joy to a rebellious teenager. Don't fret; every parent goes through this stage. It's normal and inevitable. The best thing you can do is guide them to the right path.



So, are you ready? Let's start with the first year of your newborn in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Caring for the newborn in the first year



“A baby is born with a need to be loved – and never outgrows it.”

Frank A. Clark



The world has made a drastic development when it comes to child survival since 1990. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 2.3 million children died in their first month in 2019, and there are around 7,000 newborn deaths every day.

If you have given birth to a beautiful, healthy baby, you have done a great job for the past nine months. While other infant deaths are attributed to things that are out of the mother's control, pregnancy is the most crucial time to nourish the life growing inside of you.

Regardless if it is your first time parenting a newborn baby or not, you might want to do as much as you can to ensure that your precious baby gets everything he/she needs. Babycare knowledge is crucial to ensure that your baby has a fantastic first year in life.

How to care for a newborn

Here are some following tips to keep in mind when it comes to taking care of a newborn—from breastfeeding, sleeping, crying, and everything else that covers your first few weeks with your child.

Start breastfeeding as soon as possible.

Some mothers do not breastfeed, and that's okay. But if you decide to breastfeed your child, start it as soon as possible. You can start breastfeeding while in the hospital. Give your baby the colostrum—it is the precursor to your breast milk that is rich with nutrients that your infant would need. Squeeze and put it directly into his mouth.



Spend some time alone with your baby.



Aside from your wedding, giving birth is one of the biggest days of your life. Your friends and family will want to visit and see the baby as soon as they can. However, compared to the old traditions that the baby is to be surrounded with as much as friends and family, you might need to keep them at bay for a few days. A newborn is receptive and very sensitive after birth. Hence, you need to take this time to bond with your infant. Look your child into the eyes and start talking to him. After having spent nine months in your womb, your child will be able to recognize it. Right after giving birth is one of the best times to establish your relationship with your child.

Dress your infant properly.

Now, it's time to go home. While it is very tempting to dress your baby in a fantastic dress you bought months ago, you need to dress your infant properly. Babies are not capable of regulating their body temperatures until they reach six months old. Hence, it is very crucial to dress your infant properly. As a rule of thumb, your child should be wearing as much clothing as you are, regardless if you are bringing him inside or outside. However, make sure that you don't over bundle your infant with clothes as it can cause sweating. This results in becoming chilled. You can dress your newborn carefully with layers.



Nurse your baby on demand.

If this is your first time breastfeeding, you might want to consult a lactation consultant. She will help you go through every step of the way when it comes to breastfeeding. The first six weeks of your child are crucial when it comes to breastfeeding—nurse on demand. Do not worry about establishing a feeding schedule as it can interfere with your milk supply. Rest assured that the more your baby feeds on the milk, the more your body produces. You will never run out of milk for your baby.

Learn how to latch.

It's crucial that your infant have a deep latch to feed enough milk. It also prevents swelling and pain in your nipples. Before putting your child to your breast, position him on the side and make sure that his belly is up against yours. Encourage your infant to open his mouth wide by brushing your nipples against his mouth. Once he opens, make sure that your child takes the entire nipple. A huge portion of your areola must be in his mouth.

Learn how to latch.

Now more than ever, you need to keep yourself hydrated for your little one. As a rule of thumb, drink eight glasses of water every day. Other factors, such as your age, activity level, and metabolism, can affect your calorie consumption. But for breastfeeding mothers, it should be around 2,400 daily. Don't worry, though, because breastfeeding mothers are known to lose up to four pounds every day, even with the increased calorie levels.





Always sleep close to your infant.

According to the director of Mother-Baby Behavioral Sleep Laboratory at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, James McKenna, Ph.D., sleeping close to your baby can help to regulate their heart rate. It is also known to reduce stress levels for both mother and child. Keeping them nearby as you sleep will make breastfeeding easier. By doing this, you can decrease the risks of sudden infant death syndrome. You can purchase a bassinet and have your baby close during sleeping time. Make sure that you do not sleep with your baby because of the great danger of suffocation. Just make your presence known by placing the bassinet next to the bed, and your baby will have better health.

Teach him to be calm.

Prepare yourself for sleepless nights because a baby can cry all night long. When he reaches five months old, take this opportunity to teach him how to be calm. For instance, let your baby cry for about five minutes. If he still continues to cry, pick him up and lull him back to sleep. If five minutes is too long, you can give him three. While the idea of not picking up a crying baby may cock some brows from other mothers, this technique actually teaches your baby to calm himself. When he learns it from infancy, it is a good attitude that he can continue to develop in the long run.

Call your pediatrician.

Sometimes, handling a baby alone can be overwhelming. There are things that are out of your control, and you must seek professional help. Immediately call your pediatrician if your baby...

- Is running a fever of above 100.4-degree Fahrenheit
- Is refusing to nurse and shows major changes in eating patterns
- Is always sleepy and unresponsive
- Is irritable and cries longer than normal
- Shows red spots and rash on his body
- Shows discomfort when moving his bowels
- Is vomiting



Chapter 3

Caring for a Toddler



“Children are not only innocent and curious but also optimistic and joyful and essentially happy. They are, in short, everything adults wish they could be.”

Carolyn Haywood



Your baby starts to grow and becomes more adorable than ever. The big-doe eyes and flushed cheeks will make you want to stay with your toddler all day long. However, it cannot be denied that this stage of parenting is rather tiring. Chasing toddlers is the best workout you could get as a parent. You crave tiny vacations from your children. For instance, putting your child in the car and closing the door. The little walk you make around your car is precious to many parents.

Why? Because toddlers are hyperactive and do not run off of energy. They are no longer infants who just want to sleep peacefully in their cribs. Hence, it's crucial to know how to parent a toddler right as not to drain your patience and energy. According to a 2014 study, harsh parenting can cause the child to develop behavioral and emotional problems, including aggressiveness and disobeying at school.



This is the last thing you want to experience as a parent. It can scar both you and your children for lives. Parenting a toddler is one of the most crucial stages as your kid develops and acknowledges his emotions and feelings.

Read on and discover how to care for a growing, energetic toddler.

How to care for your toddler

Here are the following tips to keep in mind when it comes to taking care of your toddler:



Always show your love and affection.

The number of times you show your love and affection should be more than the number of times you punish your toddler. That being said, don't be afraid to shower your kid with hugs and kisses or anything that will show your love to your kid. You should also celebrate small victories with your child, praise them, and give them the attention they need. It can motivate your toddler to follow the rules if your approval and joy are evident.

Establish rules.

Your child might end up frustrated if you overload him with rules, and this can lead to his little rebellion. Hence, list down your rules and prioritize those that protect his safety and welfare. Make him understand the importance of these rules and when he fully absorbs them, add some more. Take it little by little until you can establish the full set of rules over time. You can also eliminate any temptations in the house to make it easier for your child to follow the rules.

Prevent temper tantrums.

Your toddler can be smiling and, in the next second, throwing a full-blown tantrum. It can happen to any parent. Hence, you need to learn how to control and reduce the tantrum of your child. For instance, you need to learn your child's limits. The number one reason why your child misbehaves is that he doesn't understand the importance of that rule or can't do what you ask him for. To do this, you might want to explain to your kid how to follow the rules. For instance, instead of saying, "Stop hitting your brother," while playing a game, you could offer a soft suggestion of

"Why don't you take two turns?"

Moreover, you should also let your child decide for themselves. Let them pick the pair of pajamas to wear for tonight or the bedtime story to listen to. Stop saying no to everything your child asks, or it can lead to frustration for both of you. Pick your battles. Sometimes, it's okay to say yes, as long as it does not endanger the safety of your toddler. You should also prevent situations that might trigger your kid. For instance, giving him toys that are too complex for him to absorb can lead to frustration. Bringing your child to an event where he is not allowed to play or have an activity for too long can also cause temper tantrums. Your child is most likely to be irritable when they're hungry, tired, or exposed to an unfamiliar setting.



Enforce consequences for their actions.

Toddlers will break the rules. It's inevitable. Despite your best efforts, they are most likely to end up breaking one or two. Minor cryings over an argument or not getting what he wants is normal. But if your toddler starts screaming, kicking into the ground, and wailing around, you need to remove him from the situation that further upsets him. Here are some methods to help your child follow the rules and cooperate better:

● **Natural consequences**

This method is letting your child see and ponder the consequences of his actions. You can give him a taste of his medicine—as long as it does not endanger his safety or well-being. For instance, if your child throws the toy because he's demanding another, then he won't be able to play with that toy anymore.

● **Logical consequences**

This method allows you to create consequences for the actions of your child. For instance, if your child refuses to pick up his toy and throws a tantrum, tell him that he won't be able to play with his toys for a day. You can also help your child with the task, so he doesn't feel like he's being punished. But if he still refuses, then strictly follow the imposed consequences.

● **Withhold privileges**

If your child is refusing to cooperate with you, tell him that you're going to take away his privilege for a day or two. It could be his favorite toy or something that he doesn't want to be taken away. Only take things that are related to your child's misbehavior. Do not take away his needs, such as meals or medicine.

● Timeout

If your child throws a tantrum again for misbehavior, do not yell at him. Instead, crouch in front of him and gently tell him why the behavior he's showing is not acceptable. Make him understand the rules. If he doesn't listen to you, dedicate a timeout space in your house where you can take him to calm down. It should be quiet and have no distractions. Let your child ponder until he is calm enough to listen to you.



Despite the traditions, spanking, slapping, screaming, and yelling inappropriate words so your child will never be right. It might have been acceptable two decades ago, but we have progressed into a community where a child's emotions are important and must be taken care of as they grow. These are just some of the things that you can do in taking care of your toddler—a small ball of energy. Just be patient and set a good example for your kid. It is the best time to build a good relationship between the two of you.

Chapter 4

Parenting Teenagers and Young Adults



"It is easy to be a good parent to a good child, but what makes a good parent is dealing and being there for a difficult child; that is a really good parent!"

Beta Metani'Marashi



And here comes the dreaded part for most parents—the teenage years. It's hard to see your baby all grown and independent. Sometimes, they refuse to ask for your help and advice as they explore the world on their own feet. Don't be disheartened. This is normal. Even if your child is no longer a baby, it's still important to guide them to the path that will make them productive and successful adults in the future. Bad parenting during teenage years can result in family conflicts and damage your teenager's mental health.

According to a survey, one in every five young people says they are involved and concerned in some kind of a family conflict. These conflicts arise for many different reasons. Don't let your teenager be one of those who struggle throughout their adolescent life due to severe mental problems and damages caused by internal family affairs.

Read on and find out how to impose positive parenting with a teenager during their most crucial years.





Tips in Parenting a Teenager

Here are some tips to keep in mind in parenting a blossoming person and guiding them to the right path.

1. Make your teenager trust you.

Yes, you are indeed a parent. But you can also be a friend to your teenager. Even if they do not show it, teens crave security, affection, and understanding from their parents. Despite that, they also want to feel their independence and be able to decide on things on their own. During these times, you may feel shut out or not involved with them anymore.

2. Establish open communication.

One of the common parenting mistakes when it comes to handling teenagers is not establishing open communication. Even though you don't see your teen 23 hours a day, they will still respond to a good night hug or how's your sleep at the breakfast table? Keep the communication open and let them know that you are there if they need you. Establish a time where you can talk freely to them. For instance, join them while doing the chores or bathing the dog. It makes their chores easier and less lonely, but avoid trying to talk to them when they are busy with their homework, phone, or doing something. You will most likely get shut out if you do.

3. Recognize that your kids are growing up.

Sometimes, it's hard to accept that your kids are growing up, and they no longer need your guidance. Refusing to acknowledge their growth will only lead to rebellion. If they want to go out, gently ask where they're going and who they're going with. Get to know the parents of your child's friends and keep in touch with each other.



4. Spend some time with them after school.

Saturday is not the biggest danger zone for drug use, alcohol consumption, and sex. It's after school, between 3 pm and 6 pm. Hence, it's very crucial that you're with your child during these hours. Find out where he's going right after school and try to create a schedule that allows you to be with him every once in a while. If he's going out with friends, make sure there is adult supervision.

5. Eat your meals together.

If you don't eat your meals together, your teen will drift away before you know it. Eating meals together creates an opportunity for you to ask how the day went, to unwind, and also take some time to bond. This is your best shot in keeping in touch with whatever your teen is doing, addressing problems, and finding solutions in overcoming challenges. Teens who do not eat meals together with their parents are most likely to rebel or misunderstand them. Make them feel important and pay attention to them as much as you did when they were young. Hanging out and talking to them will make your teen at ease and be willing to open up about their problems.

These are parenting a teenager, for starters. Now that there's the danger of alcohol consumption, drug use, sex, and other activities, it becomes more challenging. This is the stage of their lives where they're exploring. You can allow them to explore, but only with guidance. Make sure they do not lose track of their dreams while exploring.



Chapter 5

5 Parenting Mistakes to Avoid in Raising a Teenager



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"A bad parenting can make a successful failure out of a Genius born and then blame it on the little soul for having ruined their aspirations!"

Avantika Mishra

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According to a study, 20% of your adults are living with a mental health condition. 50% of these mental disorders begin at the age of 14, while 75% begin at the age of 24. 70% of teens who are convicted of a crime have mental disorders.



Sounds disturbing, right? If you do not want your teen to be part of this unfortunate population, these years are very crucial to be there for them. Social media, technology, bad peers, and influence can affect your teen's decisions.

As a parent, it's normal to worry about your child's future. But holding them back will only do more harm than good. Sometimes, it's okay to let them fall and learn from their mistakes. If your child is sheltered for the entirety of his life, then he would have difficulty navigating his adulthood.

Having a teenager in your house can be a dream come true or a nightmare. You need to choose your battles wisely. Raising a teen can be difficult but at the end of the day, seeing them successful, happy, and fulfilled is more than the reward you could ask for.

Since this stage is a bit complex, here are the following parenting mistakes that you should avoid at all costs when it comes to raising a teenager:

1. Expecting low from your teen.

If you don't treat him like the man that he is, he will never act like one. Expecting low from your teen will not only shatter their confidence, but it can also cause a rift in your relationship. Keep in mind that your teenager is growing to become the future leaders of the world. Hence, do not expect low from him. Don't pressure him into chasing big, unrealistic dreams, either. Just talk to your teen about their goals, dreams, and how you can support them to achieve them. Make your presence be known to him while he is growing and achieving important things.

2. Picking every battle with your teen.

If your house hasn't been quiet and peaceful for a while, then you might have been picking every battle with your teen. Rebellion is most likely to develop at this stage. Saying no to everything and opposing what your teen wants will only lead to frustration on both ends. It is also unhealthy. Let him be independent. Do not clip his wings. Avoid situations that can trigger his temper. As much as possible, confront what needs to be discussed, so there's not the elephant in the room. Long, streaked hair, colored nails, tattered jeans, and ripped jackets are not really major issues. Let them experiment with who they are. There are bigger issues that you can focus on. Stop picking on their appearance unless it involves a major, inappropriate tattoo or body modification—which most teens cannot handle.

3. Not discussing with your partner.

As parents, you need to act as a team. That being said, you should discuss everything with your partner, including how parenting should be. For instance, it's common in society that mothers are meant to shield their teens from the wrath of the father. But you are only sending mixed signals to your teen, which can worsen the problem. Sit down with your partner and discuss. You need to work as a team. Otherwise, your teen will continue to rebel. No matter how hard it is, if your teen really needs punishment to learn, let him cope on his own but never leave his side.

4. Excluding teens in important household decisions.

Your teen is a part of the household, not just some decoration. That being said, you need to include him in important household decisions. Make some effort to make sure that he feels involved. When discussing things in your household, always ask for your teen's opinion. They shouldn't feel left out in their own house. Besides, involving teens in the decision-making process can help to boost their sense of morals and responsibility. It's one of the most important things that they need to learn as they prepare for adulthood.





5. Not giving your teen respect and privacy.

'I want some privacy' or 'Leave me alone!' are not signs of disrespect, but a plead to give your teen the privacy they needed. Sometimes, they have to thread things on their own. Hence, you need to give them the respect and privacy they need. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't bother to know what their business is all about. For instance, if your teen's friends are hanging out in your house, get a glimpse of what they're doing but don't make any comment unless it's inappropriate. Keeping the computer in a common room also allows you to see when your teen is online. Don't deprive him of privacy, as it is very crucial for kids their age.

Parenting a teen is a rollercoaster ride. Preparing them to become dignified, productive adults is your job. That way, they can be on their own when you're gone. All the discipline and sacrifices are just preparation for them to become independent and live their lives to the fullest. While this is the hardest part of parenting, it cannot be denied that this is also the best years for both of your lives.

Conclusion

The effects of parenting on a child's mental health vary. But it cannot be denied that bad parenting can lead to your child developing mental illness and other disorders. Worst, it can also strain your relationship with your child for the rest of your lives.

The moment you decide to have a child, you are embracing the full responsibility of parenting for them until they grow and live their own lives. Don't be the angry, tight-jawed mother, yanking the arm of a screaming, crying child in the grocery store or the hot-headed, frustrated father belting an innocent child in the yard. Both images are disturbing and should be avoided at all costs.

Sadly, this image is played in many American households nowadays. Parents who aren't prepared for parenting think that it's okay to "knock" some sense into the child by hurting, yelling, or screaming at them. But it does more harm than good.

Parenting patterns play a huge part in the child's functioning and well-being. There have been numerous studies on this claim. Any child in the presence of a bad parent is at risk of developing mental illness and making poor decisions in life.





Go back to that precious moment when you first held your baby. That could've been easily the most emotional moment of your life. You promised yourself that you're going to do everything to make your child feel loved and help them grow into a better person. Now that your child is grown, think back to that moment. How far have you come? Is everything you're doing still anchored to your child's future and happiness?

This is the main gist of parenting. It's all about sacrifices and unconditional love for your little one. You are the only one who could give them endless love, and they won't even know about it unless you make it known. Don't live your life full of regrets and strained relationships because of bad parenting.

You could be a parent twice, thrice, but they're only a child once. Hence, in the most precious years of their lives, always be there for them. As they say, there is no other love in the world that can suffice the love of a parent to his child.



Thank You

We Welcome Your Feedback.

Feel free to get in touch with us for any feedback or question.

